

Testimony of Enrique Juncadella
Board Member and Patient, Fair Haven Community Health Clinic

Appropriations Committee, Health & Hospitals Subcommittee

Good evening and thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Governor's budget proposals regarding health and hospitals.

My name is Enrique Juncadella and I am a board member at Fair Haven Community Health Clinic in New Haven. More importantly, perhaps, I have been a patient there for fourteen years.

I can attest to the high quality of care received by the patients at Fair Haven Community Health Clinic, which is a federally qualified health center that serves over 14,000 patients every year.

Tonight I am here to ask you not to reduce funding to health centers like Fair Haven.

As you know, Governor Malloy has proposed reducing funding to the "community health services" line item in the Department of Public Health, which provides grants to federally qualified health centers to help offset the costs of treating uninsured individuals. These grants help cover the gaps in revenue that result from highly complex needs of health center patients. Care coordination, translation and other services are often needed to help ensure the highest quality of care is provided and for optimal health.

The notion that the state can cut back on this funding and let these safety net providers try to stay afloat is difficult to understand. Already, health centers do a lot with very little and there is only so far one can cut before services begin to be affected – hours get cut, programs or staff are eliminated and quality of life suffers.

Moreover, cuts like the one proposed end up being "penny wise and pound foolish." People who do not receive preventive health care do get sick anyway – and they end up seeking health care in more expensive settings.

Please support federally qualified health centers by rejecting the proposal to cut this line item.

Thank you.